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**NASA**  
**Procedural**  
**Requirements**

**NPR 3435.1B**  
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**COMPLIANCE IS MANDATORY**

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## **NASA Performance Management System for the Senior Executive Service**

**Responsible Office: Office of Human Capital Management**

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# Preface

## P.1 Purpose

The NASA Performance Management System for the Senior Executive Service (SES) encourages excellence in performance; facilitates the accurate evaluation of performance based on results; provides for the systematic appraisal of performance; and provides a basis for pay, awards, development, retention, removal, and other personnel decisions. The system enhances the achievement of Agency goals by expecting and encouraging managerial excellence in individual and organizational performance and holding executives accountable for results. The system focuses on improved communication and clarity of goals and provides for participative performance planning; setting and communicating individual and organizational goals and expectations that are linked to strategic planning initiatives and the results-oriented goals of the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993; continual performance monitoring to assess achievements; and annual appraisals of performance using measures that balance individual and organizational results with customer, employee, and stakeholder perspectives.

## P.2 Applicability

This NASA Procedural Requirements (NPR) applies to NASA Headquarters and NASA Centers, including Component Facilities and the NASA Shared Services Center (NSSC). In consonance with the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended (5 U.S.C. App. § 2), and the Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990 (31 U.S.C. § 901 et seq.), nothing herein shall be construed as limiting the Inspector General's or the Chief Financial Officer's authority regarding members of the SES or SES positions within those organizations.

## P.3 Authority

- a. 5 U.S.C. § 3392, General Appointment Provisions.
- b. 5 U.S.C. § 3592, Removal from the Senior Executive Service.
- c. 5 U.S.C. §§ 4311-4315, Performance Appraisal in the Senior Executive Service.
- d. 5 C.F.R. Part 359, Subpart D, Removal of Career Appointees During Probation, and Subpart E, Removal of Career Appointees for Less Than Fully Successful Executive Performance.
- e. 5 C.F.R. Part 430, Subpart C, Managing Senior Executive Performance, and Subpart D, Performance Appraisal Certification for Pay Purposes.
- f. 5 C.F.R. Part 451, Awards.

## P.4 Applicable Documents

- a. 5 U.S.C. § 3132, Definitions and Exclusions.
- b. 5 C.F.R. 293.404(b), Retention Schedule.

- c. NPD 3000.1, Management of Human Resources.
- d. NPR 3100.1, Management of the Senior Executive Service.
- e. NPR 3451.1, NASA Awards and Recognition Program.
- f. NASA Form 1701, Senior Executive Service Performance Planning and Appraisal.

## **P.5 Measurement/Verification**

a. The Performance Review Board (PRB) shall evaluate the effectiveness of the Performance Management System to ensure that:

- (1) The results of the appraisal process take into account the Agency's assessment of its performance against program performance measures.
- (2) The appraisal process makes meaningful distinctions based on relative performance.
- (3) Salary rate adjustments, cash awards, and levels of pay based on the results of the appraisal process are commensurate with the level of individual performance and/or contribution to the Agency's performance.
- (4) The PRB shall report the findings of the evaluation and make any appropriate recommendations for process improvement to the Executive Position Managers (EPMs) and appropriate policy changes to the Assistant Administrator for Human Capital Management.

b. Appropriate training on the system will be made available to NASA executives.

## **P.6 Cancellation**

NPR 3435.1A, dated March 11, 2002.

/S/ Thomas S. Luedtke  
Associate Administrator for  
Institutions and Management

# Chapter 1: Responsibility

1.1 The Administrator, or designee, shall:

a. Approve the following for each senior executive:

(1) Annual Summary Rating.

(2) Performance bonus.

(3) Salary rate adjustment as follows:

(i) For a percentage of salary increase greater than that approved for a specific Annual Summary Rating.

(ii) To a Tier Position and any salary adjustment to a rate greater than Executive Level III.

(4) Presidential Rank Award nomination.

(5) Recommendation for a superior accomplishment award over \$10,000.

b. Appoint the chairpersons and members of the PRB and Senior Executive Committee (SEC).

1.2 The Deputy Administrator serves as the Chair of the SEC and makes final recommendations to the Administrator regarding all of the matters listed in 1.1 a. above.

1.3 The Associate Administrator shall be responsible for:

a. Assessment of the Agency's performance overall and with respect to each of its particular missions, components, programs, policy areas, and support functions.

b. Approval of the salary rate adjustment criteria based on Annual Summary Ratings taking into account the assessment of the Agency's performance.

c. Oversight of the SES performance appraisal process.

1.4 The Assistant Administrator for Human Capital Management shall assist the Administrator in the overall management of the SES.

1.5 The Director, Workforce Management and Development Division, shall:

a. Oversee and coordinate SES systems dealing with performance management and compensation.

b. Serve as the Executive Secretary of and provide direct staff support to the PRB and the SEC.

c. Determine the responsibility and requirements for the maintenance, access, transfer, and destruction of Employee Performance Files in accordance with this NPR; NASA Privacy Policy; Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) Governmentwide system of records, OPM/GOVT-2 requirements; and other applicable regulations.

1.6 Each EPM shall:

a. Approve the following for each subordinate senior executive:

(i) Salary rate adjustment up to the Executive Level III pay cap consistent with the provisions of NPR 3100.1 and with the authority otherwise delegated by the Administrator or designee or the PRB.

(ii) Superior accomplishment award up to \$10,000, except that the EPM may not be both the recommending and approving official.

(iii) Nomination for Agency honor awards.

(iv) Performance-based action.

b. Recommend the following, to the appropriate board or authority, for a subordinate senior executive:

(i) Performance Summary Rating level (i.e., Initial Summary Rating).

(ii) Salary rate adjustment:

(1) For a salary rate above the Executive Level III pay cap.

(2) For a percentage of salary increase greater than that approved for a specific Annual Summary Rating.

(3) Promotion to a Tier Position.

(iii) Performance bonus award amount.

(iv) Nomination for Presidential Rank Award.

(v) Superior accomplishment award over \$10,000.

c. Provide training and disseminate information on the Performance Management System to each subordinate senior executive.

1.7 The PRB shall:

a. Recommend salary rate adjustment criteria based on Annual Summary Ratings taking into account the assessment of the Agency's performance.

b. Evaluate the effectiveness of the Performance Management System, report the findings of the evaluation, and make any appropriate recommendations for process improvement to the EPMs and appropriate policy changes to the Assistant Administrator for Human Capital Management.

1.8 For each senior executive, the PRB:

a. Shall review and evaluate the Initial Summary Rating and, if applicable, any senior executive's written response and the higher level reviewing official's comments and recommendation on the Initial Summary Rating, and conduct any further review needed to make its recommendations.

b. Shall make a written recommendation to the Administrator or designee about each senior executive's Annual Summary Rating.

c. In addition to the Annual Summary Rating, shall recommend to the Administrator or designee, as appropriate, any performance bonus and/or salary rate adjustment based on performance.

1.9 The Rating Official of a senior executive shall:

a. In consultation with the senior executive, develop a performance plan that describes the individual and organizational expectations for the appraisal period and sets the requirements against which performance will be evaluated.

b. Monitor the senior executive's performance, conduct at least one progress review, and provide

feedback to the senior executive on progress in accomplishing the performance expectations described in the performance plan during the appraisal period.

- c. Hold the senior executive accountable for the performance management of his/her subordinate employees.
- d. Appraise, in writing, at the end of the appraisal period the senior executive's performance results relative to his/her performance requirements and assign an Initial Summary Rating.
- e. Forward the Initial Summary Rating to the PRB. Along with the Initial Summary Rating, the Rating Official may recommend a salary rate adjustment and/or performance bonus award amount.

## Chapter 2: Basic Provisions

2.1 The Agency-wide performance appraisal period will be from October 1 through September 30.

2.2 The minimum period a senior executive shall be under a performance plan before receiving a Performance Summary Rating is 120 days.

2.3 The Rating Official is responsible for establishing performance plans and appraising each subordinate senior executive; however, the assignment of a Performance Summary Rating is not official/final until approved by the Administrator or designee.

2.4 The Rating Official shall establish a written performance plan at the beginning of each appraisal period (normally within 30 days) or within 30 days of the executive's assignment to a position.

2.5 A performance plan shall contain at least one results-oriented Critical Element.

2.6 At least 60 percent of each performance plan shall be focused on achieving results, with clear measures associated with those results to show whether the goals have been achieved.

2.7 The performance plan shall describe:

a. The Critical Elements of the senior executive's work and any other relevant performance elements. Elements shall reflect both individual and organizational performance expectations and shall be consistent with the goals and performance expectations in the Agency's strategic planning initiatives in order to establish alignment.

b. The level of performance expected (performance requirement) for fully successful performance against which the senior executive's performance will be appraised.

2.8 The Rating Official shall conduct a progress review with the senior executive at least once during the appraisal period (normally at midpoint of the appraisal period). If at the midpoint in the appraisal period a senior executive has been on a performance plan for less than 120 days, a midterm review may be conducted or delayed until such time in the appraisal period when a progress review would be more advantageous to the executive.

2.9 The Rating Official shall propose an Annual Summary Rating for each eligible senior executive at the end of the appraisal period (September 30). A Performance Summary Rating shall not be final until approved by the Administrator or designee.

2.10 When an Annual Summary Rating cannot be prepared as of September 30 because the senior executive has not served under a performance plan for the minimum appraisal period (120 days), the executive's appraisal period shall be extended to September 30 of the following year. Although the supervisor may determine a Performance Summary Rating any time after the executive has served 120 days under a performance plan, no performance based pay adjustments or other personnel actions may be effected based on this rating unless approved by the Administrator or designee.

2.11 The appraisal of a senior executive shall be based on both individual and organizational performance, taking into account such factors as:

a. Results achieved in accordance with the Agency's strategic goal, objective, outcome, annual performance goal (APG), and/or Agency-specific goal and/or external commitment within the senior executive's mission-related or functional area of responsibility.

b. Customer satisfaction, to the extent applicable.



- c. Employee perspectives.
- d. The performance of subordinate employees.
- e. Meeting equal employment opportunity, diversity, and safety goals and complying with the merit system principles.

2.12 A senior executive's performance for each performance element of his/her performance plan shall be appraised at one of five performance element rating levels:

- a. Outstanding. Performance exceeds performance requirements to an exceptional degree.
- b. Highly Successful. Performance exceeds performance requirements to a substantial degree.
- c. Fully Successful. Performance fully meets performance requirements.
- d. Minimally Satisfactory. Performance only partially meets performance requirements.
- e. Unsatisfactory. Performance does not meet performance requirements.

2.13. The Performance Summary Rating is derived from the ratings of an executive's Critical Elements. NASA Form 1701 provides detailed instructions on weighting the performance elements to derive the Summary Rating. A senior executive's overall performance shall be appraised at one of five Performance Summary Rating levels:

- a. Outstanding. Total performance in the position exceeds performance requirements to an exceptional degree.
- b. Highly Successful. Total performance in the position exceeds performance requirements to a substantial degree.
- c. Fully Successful. Total performance in the position fully meets performance requirements.
- d. Minimally Satisfactory. Total performance in the position only partially meets performance requirements. One or more Critical Elements is rated Minimally Satisfactory and no element is rated below Minimally Satisfactory.
- e. Unsatisfactory. Total performance in the position does not meet performance requirements. This rating is assigned when any Critical Element is rated Unsatisfactory.

2.14 Within ten calendar days of receipt of the Initial Summary Rating assigned by the Rating Official, a senior executive may provide a written response and/or request a higher level review.

2.15 The PRB shall consider the Initial Summary Rating, any written response from the senior executive, any comments and/or rating recommendation from a higher level reviewing official, the relative performance of the senior executive, and the overall performance of the organization and shall recommend an Annual Summary Rating for the Administrator's (or designee's) consideration.

2.16 The Administrator or designee shall determine a senior executive's Annual Summary Rating, taking into consideration the recommendation of the PRB and the overall performance of the organization.

2.17 Performance appraisals and ratings may not be appealed to the Merit Systems Protection Board or grieved under the NASA Grievance System, (NPR 3771.1).

2.18 A senior executive with an Annual Summary Rating of Fully Successful or above is eligible to be considered for an SES performance award (bonus), an increase in pay, a Presidential Rank

Award (after a minimum of three years of eligible service), and nonmonetary recognition. Non-career SES are not eligible for bonuses or rank awards.

2.19 A senior executive with an Annual Summary Rating of less than Fully Successful may be considered for a reduction in pay.

2.20 A senior executive who receives an Annual Summary Rating of Unsatisfactory shall be reassigned or transferred to another SES position or removed from the SES.

2.21 A senior executive who receives two Unsatisfactory Annual Summary Ratings in any five-year period or two less than Fully Successful Annual Summary Ratings in any three-year period shall be removed from the SES.

2.22 A senior executive who is removed from the SES for performance and who is eligible under OPM regulations shall be entitled to placement in a position at GS-15 or above (or an equivalent position). An otherwise eligible senior executive removed from the SES for performance may elect discontinued service retirement rather than fall back to a GS-15 position.

# Chapter 3: Performance Appraisal Process

## 3.1 Performance Planning and Appraisal Forms

Standard Agencywide SES performance planning and appraisal forms shall be used.

## 3.2 Performance Planning

3.2.1 The Rating Official shall establish, in consultation with the senior executive, a written performance plan at the beginning of the appraisal period. Normally, the plan shall be developed with and communicated to the senior executive within 30 days of the beginning of the appraisal period or within 30 days of the executive's assignment to a position.

3.2.2 A performance plan shall describe the Critical Elements of the senior executive's work and any other relevant performance elements.

3.2.3 At least 60 percent of the executive's performance plan shall focus on achieving measurable results and shall contain at least one Critical Element which:

- a. Reflects both individual and organizational performance expectations.
- b. Is aligned with an Agency strategic goal, objective, outcome, APG, and/or Agency-specific goal and/or external commitment within the senior executive's mission-related or functional area of responsibility.

3.2.4 A performance plan shall describe the expected results (performance expectations) and the level of performance expected (performance requirement) for fully successful performance against which the senior executive's performance will be appraised.

3.2.4.1 Performance expectations shall provide for:

- a. Alignment - They shall be derived from, and clearly linked to, an Agency strategic goal, objective, outcome, APG, and/or other Agency-specific goal and/or external commitment within the senior executive's mission-related or functional area of responsibility.
- b. Consultation - They shall be developed with the input and involvement of the senior executive and are communicated to him/her at the beginning of the applicable appraisal period, and/or at appropriate times thereafter.
- c. Results - They shall be applicable to the executive's respective areas of responsibility; reflect expected Agency and/or organizational outcomes and outputs, performance targets or metrics, policy/program objectives, and/or milestones; identify specific programmatic crosscutting, external, and partnership-oriented goals or objectives, as applicable; and be stated in terms of observable, measurable, and/or demonstrable performance.
- d. Balance - In addition to expected results, they shall include appropriate measures or indicators of employee and/or customer/stakeholder feedback; quality, quantity, timeliness, and cost effectiveness, as applicable; and those technical, leadership, and/or managerial competencies or behaviors that contribute to and are necessary to distinguish outstanding performance.

#### 3.2.4.2 Performance requirements:

- a. Shall support the achievement of an Agency strategic goal, objective, outcome, APG, and/or Agency-specific goal and/or external commitment within the senior executive's mission-related or functional area of responsibility.
- b. Shall be described in terms of clear, credible measures (e.g., quality, quantity, timeliness, and/or cost effectiveness) of performance.
- c. Shall be Specific, Measurable, Aggressive yet Achievable, Results-oriented, and Time-based (SMART).
- d. May be efficiency measures, programmatic metrics, institutional metrics, external metrics, and/or other metrics as appropriate.

3.2.5 If any generic performance requirement in NASA Form 1701, SES Performance Planning and Appraisal is not applicable to the senior executive's position, the Rating Official, in consultation with the senior executive, shall document such on the form. Additions and modifications may not be made to a generic performance element.

### 3.3 Monitoring Performance

3.3.1 The Rating Official shall monitor the senior executive's performance during the appraisal period.

3.3.2 A progress review may be initiated at any time by the Rating Official or the senior executive. However, at a minimum, the Rating Official shall conduct at least one progress review with the executive during the appraisal period.

3.3.3 Normally, the progress review shall be conducted within 30 days of March 31 (i.e., midpoint of the appraisal period). If at midpoint in the appraisal period a senior executive has been on a performance plan for less than 120 days, a midterm progress review may be conducted or delayed until such time in the appraisal period when a progress review would be more advantageous to the executive.

3.3.4 The primary purposes of a progress review are to:

- a. Discuss the senior executive's level of performance to date; provide feedback on his/her progress in accomplishing the performance expectations described in the performance plan; and provide, when necessary, advice and assistance on how to improve his/her performance.
- b. Identify and, if possible, resolve any issues or problems (e.g., resources) that may be an impediment to the achievement of the individual and/or organizational performance expectations identified in the performance plan.
- c. If necessary, revise the performance plan to reflect any new performance expectations or changes to existing performance expectations; changes shall be documented in the performance plan.

3.3.5 NASA Form 1701 shall be signed and dated by both the Rating Official and the senior executive to document the midterm progress review.

### 3.4 Appraising Performance

3.4.1 A senior executive shall be given an Annual Summary Rating at the end of the appraisal period (September 30). An Annual Summary Rating shall not be official/final until approved by the Administrator or designee.

3.4.2 When an Annual Summary Rating cannot be prepared as of September 30 because the senior executive has not served under a performance plan for the minimum appraisal period (120 days), the executive's appraisal period shall be extended to September 30 of the following year. Although the supervisor may determine a Performance Summary Rating any time after the executive has served 120 days under a performance plan, no performance based pay adjustments or other personnel actions may be effected based on this rating unless approved by the Administrator or designee.

3.4.3 At a minimum, a senior executive shall be appraised on the performance of the Critical Elements in his/her performance plan.

3.4.4 The appraisal of a senior executive shall be based on both individual and organizational performance, taking into account such factors as:

- a. Results achieved in accordance with an Agency strategic goal, objective, outcome, APG, and/or Agency-specific goal and/or external commitment within the senior executive's mission-related or functional area of responsibility. The results may be identified, for example, by the completion of the Program Assessment Rating Tool or the annual Performance and Accountability Report, and, when possible, shall be described in terms of clear, credible measures of performance (e.g., quality, quantity, timeliness, and/or cost-effectiveness).
- b. Customer satisfaction, to the extent applicable.
- c. Employee perspectives.
- d. Subordinate employees' performance ensuring that their performance:
  - (i) Expectations identify at least one Critical Element that is clearly traceable to an Agency strategic goal, objective, outcome, APG, and/or Agency-specific goal and/or external commitment and identified in the respective senior executive's performance plan.
  - (ii) Is appraised realistically against clear, measurable standards of performance.
  - (iii) Is appropriately recognized with performance awards that are commensurate with the level of performance, responsibility, and progress towards goals and objectives or corrective action taken to improve the employee's performance.
- e. Meeting equal employment opportunity, diversity, and safety goals and complying with the merit system principles.

3.4.5 No specific mechanisms are prescribed for considering customer, employee, and other stakeholder perspectives. A Rating Official shall use, at his/her discretion, formal mechanisms such as surveys (e.g., Federal Human Capital Survey) or less formal mechanisms such as unsolicited customer and employee feedback and/or analysis of personnel data (e.g., employee turnover rates, diversity reports, employee grievances).

## 3.5 Rating Performance

3.5.1 The Rating Official shall assign and document on the NASA Form 1701 a performance element rating level for each element in the performance plan and a Performance Summary Rating level (i.e., Initial Summary Rating) of the senior executive's performance. In addition, the Rating

Official shall prepare an overall performance assessment narrative that describes the specific achievements, results, and behaviors relating to both program/project/functional capabilities and management competencies that justify the Initial Summary Rating. The actual individual and organizational achievements during the appraisal period, the appraisal, and the Initial Summary Rating shall be discussed with the executive. However, it shall be communicated that no rating is final until approved by the Administrator or designee.

3.5.1.1 When an executive has worked across organizational lines or on programs that interface with more than one Center Director or Associate/Assistant Administrator (AA), EPMs will consult with other managers who are knowledgeable of the executive's performance and consider their input when recommending an Initial Summary Rating.

3.5.1.2 Center Directors will review and evaluate executives who lead Center functional offices with input from the counterpart Mission Support AA. The Mission Support AA shall provide a written evaluation of the principal Center functional lead (not to exceed one page), which shall be attached to the individual's Initial Summary Rating, and remain a part of the Annual Summary Rating. This evaluation shall address the elements in the performance plan.

3.5.1.3 The Chief, Safety and Mission Assurance (S&MA) formally assesses the S&MA functional leaders at the Centers and the S&MA managers for the Space Shuttle, International Space Station, and Constellation programs. The Rating Official shall attach this assessment to the individual's Initial Summary Rating as part of the Annual Summary Rating. This evaluation shall address the elements in the performance plan.

3.5.1.4 The program managers for Space Shuttle, International Space Station, and Constellation will be appraised by the appropriate Mission Director, with input by the Center Director.

3.5.1.5 Center Chief Financial Officers (CFOs) are rated by the Agency CFO, considering input by the Center Director. Center Directors shall provide a written evaluation of the Center CFO (not to exceed one page), which shall be attached to the individual's Initial Summary Rating, and remain a part of the Annual Summary Rating. This evaluation shall address the elements in the performance plan.

3.5.2 A senior executive may provide a written response within 10 days of receipt of an Initial Summary Rating and/or request a higher level review.

3.5.2.1 If the executive requests a higher level review, successive reviews shall be conducted by officials at the next higher level(s) (if any) within the management chain (generally the EPM).

3.5.2.2 The reviewing official may not change the Rating Official's Initial Summary Rating but may recommend a different rating to the PRB.

3.5.2.3 The reviewing official shall provide a copy of his/her findings and recommendations to the senior executive, the Rating Official, the EPM, the next higher level of review, and/or the PRB.

3.5.3 The PRB shall review and evaluate the Initial Summary Rating and, if applicable, any senior executive's response and the comments and recommendation(s) from the reviewing official on the Initial Summary Rating, and conduct any further review needed to make its recommendation. A recommendation to the Administrator or designee about each senior executive's Annual Summary Rating shall be in writing. Prior to determining a rating recommendation, the PRB shall consider the following:

a. The relevant program performance assessments as evidenced by the annual Performance and Accountability Report, the results from the completion of the Program Assessment Rating Tool, or findings/recommendations from other reviews and evaluations.



b. For supervisory senior executives, the degree to which:

(i) Performance expectations of subordinate employees clearly link to the Agency's strategic goals or organizational, program, or policy objectives.

(ii) Employees' performance is fairly and consistently appraised based on individual and organizational performance results.

(iii) Employees' performance ratings and awards reflect meaningful performance distinctions commensurate with the level of individual performance, responsibility, and progress towards the achievement of the organization's goals and objectives.

3.5.4 The Administrator or designee shall determine the final Annual Summary Rating for each senior executive. In making this determination, the Administrator or designee shall consider the recommendation of the PRB and the overall performance of the organization. The senior executive shall be provided a copy of his/her Annual Summary Rating.

3.5.5 The Annual Summary Rating is the official rating and may not be appealed to the Merit Systems Protection Board or grieved under the NASA Grievance System, (NPR 3771.1).

## **3.6 Preparing for the Next Appraisal Period**

3.6.1 During the appraisal discussion, the Rating Official and senior executive shall begin performance planning for the next appraisal period. Normally, a written performance plan shall be provided to the executive within 30 days after the beginning of the new appraisal period.

3.6.2 If input is required during the rating process under paragraph 4.5, the same officials shall be consulted when establishing performance objectives and requirements.

## **3.7 Details and Position Changes**

3.7.1 The appraisal of a senior executive's performance and the assignment of an Initial Summary Rating at the end of an appraisal period is the responsibility of the Rating Official (i.e., supervisor of record) on that date.

3.7.2 When a senior executive is detailed or temporarily reassigned for 120 days or longer to another position during the appraisal period, the supervisor to whom the executive is detailed or temporarily assigned shall establish performance expectations for the executive and shall appraise the executive's performance in writing. This appraisal shall be considered by the Rating Official when assigning an Initial Summary Rating at the end of the appraisal period.

3.7.3 When a senior executive changes jobs or transfers to another agency after completing the minimum appraisal period, the Rating Official shall appraise the executive's performance in writing before the executive leaves. This appraisal shall be considered by the gaining supervisor of record when assigning an Initial Summary Rating at the end of the appraisal period.

## **3.8 Termination of Appraisal Period**

An appraisal period may be terminated and a Performance Summary Rating assigned if a senior executive has served for at least the minimum appraisal period (120 days) under a performance plan

provided that the Rating Official can determine that an adequate basis exists on which to appraise the executive's performance, and there is a need to do so. No pay adjustments or other personnel actions may be effected based on this rating unless approved by the Administrator or designee. An appraisal period for a career appointee [as defined in 5 U.S.C. 3132(a)(4)] cannot be terminated within 120 days after the beginning of a new Presidential administration.

## **3.9 Failure to Meet Performance Expectations**

A supervisor should take appropriate action to address less than Fully Successful performance at any time during the appraisal period. When it is determined that a senior executive's performance is less than Fully Successful, the Rating Official shall develop a plan to assist the executive in improving his/her performance and shall evaluate the executive's performance before an appraisal period can be terminated. The plan may include, but is not limited to, formal training, on-the-job training, counseling, and closer supervision.

## **3.10 Using Performance Results**

3.10.1 The results of performance appraisals and ratings shall be used as a basis for adjusting pay, granting awards, making other personnel decisions, and assessing a senior executive's development needs.

3.10.2 A senior executive with an Annual Summary Rating of Fully Successful or above is eligible to be considered for an SES Performance Award (bonus), an increase in pay, a Presidential Rank Award (after a minimum of three years of eligible service), and nonmonetary recognition. Non-career SES members are not eligible for bonuses or rank awards.

3.10.3 A senior executive with an Annual Summary Rating of less than Fully Successful may be considered for a reduction in pay.

3.10.4 A senior executive who receives an Annual Summary Rating of Unsatisfactory shall be reassigned or transferred to another SES position or removed from the SES.

3.10.5 A senior executive who receives two Unsatisfactory Annual Summary Ratings in any five-year period or two less than Fully Successful Annual Summary Ratings in any three-year period shall be removed from the SES.

3.10.6 A senior executive who is removed from the SES for performance and who is eligible under OPM regulations shall be entitled to placement in a position at GS-15 or above (or an equivalent position). An otherwise eligible executive removed from the SES for performance may elect discontinued service retirement rather than fall back to a GS-15 position.



# Chapter 4: Documentation of Performance-Related Records

4.1 In accordance with the responsibility and requirements as determined by the Office of Human Capital Management, Workforce Management and Development Division, NASA Headquarters, all performance-related records for a senior executive shall be maintained in an Employee Performance File for no less than five years from the date the final Annual Summary Rating is issued and shall be available to:

- a. Agency officials having a need for the information.
- b. The senior executive.
- c. The OPM in connection with its personnel management evaluation role.

4.2 The Rating Official shall provide the senior executive the following documents at the time they are prepared:

- a. The performance plan.
- b. The Initial Summary Rating, including the overall performance assessment narrative for the appraisal period and the performance plan that identifies the performance element ratings upon which the Initial Summary Rating was based.
- c. Written notification of the right to request a higher level review.
- d. Any written comments and/or recommendation(s) for a different rating by a higher level reviewing official.
- e. A copy of the final Annual Summary Rating.

4.3 Performance-related records shall, at a minimum, include:

- a. The Annual Summary Rating, including the overall performance assessment narrative and any additional required assessments for the appraisal period, and the performance plan on which the assessment is based.
- b. Any written comments and/or recommendation(s) for a different rating by a higher level reviewing official.
- c. The written recommendation for the Annual Summary Rating, from the PRB.
- d. When applicable, any Performance Summary Rating from the Rating Official of a position to which the senior executive was detailed or previously assigned, or from which transferred.
- e. Other personnel decisions (e.g., removal from the SES), including supporting documentation, based on performance.

4.4 When a senior executive moves to another SES position, either within NASA or with another agency, all appropriate performance-related records five years old or less shall be forwarded in the Employee Performance File along with the executive's Official Personnel Folder.

4.5 When a NASA career senior executive accepts a Presidential appointment [5 U.S.C. Section 3392(c)], the Employee Performance File shall be forwarded to and maintained by the gaining

organization throughout the length of the appointment.

# Appendix A. Definitions

A.1 Annual Summary Rating. See Performance Ratings.

A.2 Appraisal Period. The one-year period from October 1 through September 30 for which a senior executive's performance will be appraised and rated.

A.3 Balanced Measures. An approach to performance measurement that balances organizational results with the perspectives of distinct groups, including customers and employees.

A.4 Critical Element. A key component of a senior executive's work that contributes to organizational goals and results and is so important that unsatisfactory performance of the element would make the executive's overall job performance unsatisfactory.

A.5 Executive Position Managers (EPMs). Officials-in-Charge of Headquarters Offices (OICs) and Center Directors.

A.6 Minimum Appraisal Period. The minimum amount of time that a senior executive shall be under a performance plan before a rating may be assigned. This period is 120 days.

A.7 Outstanding Performance. The performance that substantially exceeds the normally high performance expected of any senior executive, as evidenced by exceptional accomplishments or contributions to the Agency's performance.

A.8 Performance Appraisal or Evaluation. The comparison of the actual performance of a senior executive against his/her performance expectations. Each executive's appraisal shall take into account appropriate assessments of the Agency's performance overall, and with respect to each of its particular missions, components, programs, policy areas, and support functions before an Initial Summary Rating is recommended.

A.9 Performance Expectations. The performance elements and performance requirements that constitute the senior executive's performance plan established for communicating what the executive is expected to do and the manner in which he/she is expected to do it.

A.10 Performance Management System. The policies, practices, and procedures the Agency has established for planning, monitoring, developing, evaluating, and rewarding both individual and organizational performance and for using resulting performance information in making personnel decisions.

A.11 Performance Plan. The written summary of work the senior executive is expected to accomplish during the appraisal period and the requirements against which performance is evaluated (i.e., performance expectations). The plan addresses all performance elements established for the senior executive.

A.12 Performance Requirement. A written statement of the performance expected for a performance element. Also called a performance standard, it is the expected result which is Specific, Measurable, Aggressive yet Achievable, Results-oriented, and Time-based (SMART) described in terms of clear, credible measures (e.g, quality, quantity, timeliness, and/or cost effectiveness).

A.13 Performance Review Board (PRB). A board required by law to make recommendations to the Administrator or designee on the performance of senior executives. The Senior Executive Committee (SEC) serves as the PRB for PRB members and other executives reporting to the Administrator, including Center Directors and executives assigned to the Office of the

## Administrator.

A.14 Program Performance Measures. The results-oriented measures of performance, whether at the Agency, component, or functional level, which include, for example, measures under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA).

A.15 Progress Review. A review of the executive's progress in meeting performance requirements. It is not a performance rating.

## A.16. Performance Ratings.

a. Performance Element Rating. The rating assigned to each Critical Element in the performance plan.

b. Performance Summary Rating. The overall rating derived from the ratings of an executive's Critical Elements.

c. Initial Summary Rating. The overall rating level the supervisor proposes from appraising the senior executive's performance at the end of the appraisal period and forwards to the PRB. This is not an official/final rating until approved by the Administrator or designee.

d. Annual Summary Rating. The overall rating level that the Administrator or designee assigns at the end of the appraisal period after considering the PRB recommendation. This is the official/final rating.

A.17 Rating Official. The senior executive (usually the immediate supervisor) who is responsible for planning and communicating, monitoring, appraising, and rating the performance of a subordinate senior executive.

A.18 Relative Performance. The performance of a senior executive with respect to the performance of other executives, including their contribution to Agency performance, where appropriate, as determined by the application of a certified appraisal system.

A.19 Senior Executive Committee (SEC). See Performance Review Board.

A.20 Tier Position. A senior-level executive position established by the Agency based on position responsibility and scope and the impact of the executive's performance on the success of the NASA mission. There are three levels of Tier Positions differentiated by salary rates greater than Executive Level III. The Agency restricts the number of Tier Positions to approximately 25 percent of its senior executive positions with the expectation that the incumbents will continue to perform at an exceptional level and occupy a senior-level executive position.

## Appendix B. Acronyms

- A.1 APG: Annual Performance goal.
- A.2 EPM: Executive Position Manager.
- A.3 GPRA: Government Performance and Results Act.
- A.4 OICs: Officials in Charge.
- A.5 OPM: Office of Personnel Management.
- A.6 PRB: Performance Review Board.
- A.7 SEC: Senior Executive Committee.
- A.8 SMART: Specific, Measurable, Aggressive yet Achievable, Results-oriented, and Time-based.